

VZCZCXRO9147  
RR RUEHDBU  
DE RUEHVL #0487/01 1461125  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
R 261125Z MAY 06  
FM AMEMBASSY VILNIUS  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0202  
INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE  
RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE  
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 0051  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC  
RUEHNO/US MISSIONS BRUSSELS BE  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 VILNIUS 000487

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

STATE FOR INR

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/23/2016

TAGS: [AF](#) [PINR](#) [MASS](#) [MOPS](#) [PTER](#) [LH](#)

SUBJECT: (C) LITHUANIA'S ISAF PRT (C-RE6-00473)

REF: SECSTATE 77257

Classified By: Pol/econ officer Traver Gudie for reasons 1.4 (b,d)

¶1. (C) This cable responds to reftel's questions about host country's Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) in Afghanistan.

-----  
GOL COMMITTED TO AFGHANISTAN PRT  
-----

¶2. (C) The GOL remains committed to leading the PRT in Ghor Province. Since standing up the PRT in August 2005, Lithuania's 124 personnel in Chaghcharan have had a significant impact on the stability and quality of life of local residents. The Lithuanian MFA told us that they plan to increase reconstruction projects and civilian contributions in the near future. Given the challenges of operating and sustaining the PRT, however, it is very unlikely that Lithuania will volunteer or be susceptible to persuasion to contribute to another PRT elsewhere in Afghanistan. Lithuania has no intention to send maneuver battalions to Southern Afghanistan.

¶3. (C) The GOL has invited Ukrainian participation in the PRT, and MFA officials were in Kiev May 24 to negotiate both military and civilian elements of potential Ukrainian participation.

-----  
BROAD PARLIAMENTARY SUPPORT FOR AFGHAN MISSION  
-----

¶4. (SBU) All but one political party, the Liberal Democrats, supports Lithuanian participation in Afghanistan and Iraq. The Liberal Democrats, an opposition group with ten members in the Parliament, have repeatedly called (so far, unsuccessfully) for the withdrawal of Lithuanian troops from Iraq, but they have never called for Lithuania's withdrawal from the ISAF mission. Parliament overwhelmingly voted to facilitate Lithuania's support for international operations in June 2005 by increasing the ceiling of deployable personnel to 420 and by empowering the military to deploy or redeploy troops within theater without seeking parliamentary authorization.

-----  
MAIN GOALS: STRENGTHEN GOVERNMENT, INCREASE SECURITY  
-----

¶5. (C) According to MOD officials, Lithuania sees two main

tasks for its PRT in Ghor Province: to strengthen the influence of the central government and to assist in establishing security and stability. As a result, Lithuanian troops focus on conducting presence patrols, enabling reconstruction projects, and cultivating and advising provincial and local leaders. They do not focus on offensive operations, nor has there been significant intelligence regarding Taliban or Al Qaeda activity in Lithuania's sector to support mounting offensive operations. The PRT is primarily organized and equipped to conduct patrols and to provide for defensive force protection.

-----  
OPERATIONS AGAINST TALIBAN  
-----

¶6. (C) The Lithuanians interpret the rules of engagement as giving them latitude to conduct offensive operations if necessary. Lt. Col. Mockunas of the Defense Staff's Director of Operations told us that Lithuania would mount offensive operations against Taliban or other insurgents within its capabilities if intelligence indicated the need. The PRT commander would request external military support through the ISAF chain of command should the operation exceed PRT capabilities. Since the rocket attack on the PRT Chaghcharan base camp on 19 May, the PRT has sent out nightly ambush patrols along likely attack routes and likely rocket and mortar launch sites in the vicinity of the camp.

-----  
SHOWING THE FLAG  
-----

VILNIUS 00000487 002 OF 002

¶7. (C) The Lithuanian-led PRT in Chaghcharan conducts presence patrols in all seven districts of Ghor Province. The PRT comprises five Mobile Liaison and Observation Teams (MLOT) of six to seven soldiers each. The province covers over 36,000 square kilometers; therefore, MLOT patrols in the districts closest to the PRT base camp in Chaghcharan typically last one day. MLOT patrols to the districts in the southwestern portion of the province can last two to three days. The purpose of these patrols is to demonstrate ISAF's commitment to the security and stability of the countryside, to meet with local leaders, to gather information on the security and development situation in the districts, and to escort and monitor personnel providing reconstruction assistance.

-----  
WORKING WITH LOCALS  
-----

¶8. (C) GOL officials tell us that the PRT has established strong, positive relations with local and tribal leaders throughout the province in a relatively benign security environment. MOD officials said that the PRT enjoys a close and cooperative relationship with the Afghan National Police and the Afghan National Army. The PRT includes a 50-person Afghan National Army element which augments base camp security and works for the Lithuanian Force Protection Company Commander in Chaghcharan. The PRT reconstruction initiatives planned or currently underway in Ghor province include:

- Law enforcement training and provision of basic equipment to Afghan National Police and other institutions supporting the rule of law;
- Development of a police tactical radio network;
- Renovation of the Ghor Province Police Headquarters building;
- Promotion of good governance, financial management, and

administrative reform; and

-- Renovation of the Ghor Prosecutor's office building.

¶9. (C) The PRT coordinates funding and administration of all of these projects with other partner nations and governmental and civic organizations. The PRT coordinated, supervised, and completed projects to build a wall around a local girls' school and to renovate the clinic in Chaghcharan. The PRT is currently seeking funding sponsorship to improve the main road from Chaghcharan to Herat. MOD officials tell us that the PRT Commander lacks money for quick impact reconstruction assistance projects. Lithuanian military regulations and accounting procedures are the primary obstacle to the establishment of a commander's discretionary fund, they say.

-----  
PLANS TO INCREASE THE CIVILIAN COMPLEMENT  
-----

¶10. (C) Eight civilians (three Lithuanians, four Amcits, one Icelander) report directly to the PRT commander. These civilians often accompany the five military MLOT on patrol throughout the province. Additionally, military force protection elements often provide security at civilian-coordinated project sites. The Lithuanian civilians comprise one legal advisor, one police advisor, and one civilian representative of the MOD. In a recent meeting, MFA representatives told us that they intend to increase the civilian element, expanding the civilian law enforcement and security training role and bringing in agricultural and engineering specialists.

MULL